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# BOOK REVIEWS



IN CHARGE OF  
M. E. CAMERON

## THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

The special committee appointed last year by the New York Association for the Blind, of which the object is "to ascertain the direct causes of preventable blindness and to take such measures in co-operation with the medical profession as may lead to the elimination of such diseases," has started the publication of a series of booklets or pamphlets in the hope of disseminating preventive knowledge.

Nos. 1 and 2 are ready for distribution and may be had of Mr. George A. Hubbell, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

No. 1 states the object of the committee, gives some startling statistics of the number of blind persons, and particularly the needlessly blind in the United States, and indicates very briefly where the responsibility for the continuance of preventable blindness must lie. Doctors have, it seems, done their part, and for years past the subject has been copiously written on, and the following extract summarizes the present situation of affairs and points the way onward:

"For years there has been a movement in the medical profession for the prevention of infantile ophthalmia. This movement has been fully approved by the American Medical Association, the New York State and County Medical Societies, the New York Academy of Medicine, and by the state and city Departments of Health, as well as by leaders of the profession throughout the state and nation. Scores of addresses have been made before medical organizations on this subject. One committee after another has collected statistics. Medical literature on the subject is not wanting, and medical interest in the prevention of this form of blindness is not by any means lacking. But the knowledge which physicians have on the subject is practically unknown to the public. It is considered of great importance to extend this knowledge to the general lay public in order that parents everywhere may insist on the use of a suitable prophylactic in the eyes of the new-born, and in order that the careless members of the medical profession and midwives, ill-trained or not trained at all, may be brought to a sense of their duty." And again: "The responsibility for preventable blindness must be laid to the charge

of those who are able, or ought to be able, to prevent it, but a knowledge on the part of the public of the dangers which may threaten the eyes, the way that these may be avoided, and the necessity of early and proper care, will safe-guard many eyes that would otherwise be lost."

"The end to be accomplished is the prevention of blindness, but the steps by which this end is to be reached are neither few nor simple. Blindness must be prevented by narrowing its domain on every side. The committee appointed to have this work in charge purpose full co-operation with the medical profession and with the state and county boards of health; and they invite the hearty co-operation of all persons interested in the subject, and of all organizations working for social betterment."

Book No. 2 has for its title, "Children Who Need not Have Been Blind." It deals only with the subject of ophthalmia neonatorum, so that the appalling fact chronicled in its opening sentence, that "one-quarter of all the blind children in all the blind schools of this country are unnecessarily blind," might have been rendered even more tragical if to this percentage had been added those blinded by accident.

A feature of No. 2 is its pathetic pictures, to me far more touching than the picture of the great Spanish artist, Joaquin Sorolla y Bastida, "*Triste Herencia*" (A Sad Inheritance), which was one of the features of this great man's collection shown lately at the Spanish Society in New York. More touching because so much nearer home—these children may be of the family of my next door neighbor.

The New York Association for the Blind has many notable names on its executive committee, among others Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, Miss Helen Keller, Dr. F. Park Lewis, Dr. J. S. Billings, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, Mr. Samuel Langhorne Clemens, Miss Winnifred Holt, Miss Louisa Schuyler, Miss Lillian Wald, and many others.

**A SHORT MANUAL FOR MONTHLY NURSES.** By Charles J. Cullingworth, M.D., F.R.C.P., Consulting Obstetric Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, London. Sixth Edition, price 60 cents. J. A. Churchill, 7 Great Marlborough St., London. P. Blakiston's Son & Co., Philadelphia.

Perhaps no man in the medical profession in England after Lord Lister and Sir Lawson Tait, is so well known in America as Dr. Cullingworth. His little manual which has reached its sixth edition is not designed as a text-book, but rather as a reference book, for that comfortable but non-professional class of women who are known as "monthly nurses," and who occupy a position quite distinct from trained graduate